

her days in emptied cups, or that desolation
pushed the buttons of each new machine.
They won't tell you that she sometimes
whispered words against those walls of glass...

UNEMPLOYED PAINTER, they'll call me,
not caring that the long untended
kindergarten of my life had ended just
six singing months before, or that a
hand that followed blindly an unseeing
eye into an alleyway of isolation,
had been led forth, unleashed,
and nurtured into certainty at last.

SUBURBAN MATRON, they'll call her,
and add that she was THIRTY-SEVEN.
They won't mention that her skin
smelled of apples ... and that the molten
amber of her eyes at certain moments
changed to jet. They won't tell you
that she was afraid of storms ...
and sunsets, and the age of thirty-eight

-- Phyllis Onstott Arone
Logansport, Indiana

Rooms

A room
like other rooms, he thought
but she stopped short
when she entered

and he saw it
for the first time

from the house next door
how each thing

book, picture, chair
memento pinned

to the wall
even shoes and socks
blabbed shamelessly
about his life
with an overwhelming
candor
-- the risk he takes
who lives alone
so long he grows
accustomed to
walking naked
in his own house
forgetting both strangers
and friends

-- Jack Anderson

Berkeley, California

Past Due

The artist is not appreciated
in his lifetime,
I can hardly wait
for posthumous recognition --
When you come
bearing those wreaths
and flowers
to extol my far off spirit,
tread carefully
for one small sprig
of vanity
elbowing your rose
will stretch its stem
to an exquisite
camera angle.

-- S. L. Friedman

Los Angeles, California